

Remarks

Claims 1-13 and 15-30 are currently pending and stand rejected. Claims 15-18 have been objected to. Claims 1, 9, 10, 15-19, and 27 have been amended. Applicants assert that the claims are now in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

Interview Summary

The undersigned participated in a telephone interview with the Examiner on July 28, 2004. During the interview, deficiencies in the Williams reference relative to subject matter of the present invention were discussed. Namely, it was discussed how Williams provides options for formatting from the server to the client computer to allow the user to select from the set of options how the data should be formatted. It was further discussed how allowing the users of various client computer to select the desired format for their data causes non-uniformity due to different users selected different formats. It was further discussed how the present invention provides for the main office forcing a particular data format upon the remote office so that the data from the remote office is less difficult to manage and so that the data format from one remote office to the next remains uniform. It was agreed that amendments would be made to the claims to more clearly include this subject matter.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19, 20, 23, and 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keyser in view of Williams. Claims 5 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keyser in view of Williams and further in view of Schaefer (US Pat 5,826,268). Claims 21 and 22 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keyser in view of Williams and further in view of Hamala (US Pat 5,345,586). Claims 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keyser in view of Williams and further in view of Spencer (US Pat 6,356,909). Claims 27-30 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lipner (US Pat 5,553,304) in view of Williams. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 1-9

The Office Action has rejected claim 1 by stating that Keyser discloses a main office and a remote office where the main office retains rules that dictate the type of data required for entry and rules that dictate what information is needed in order to access the services of the main office. The Office Action notes that Keyser fails to disclose a formatting standard rule and the formatting standard rule being sent to the remote office before data transmission. However, the Office Action states that Williams teaches a rule that comprises a formatting standard rule used by the main office and the formatting standard rule being sent to the remote office before the remote office sends data such that the data is first correctly formatted to be compatible with the format used by the main office. The Office Action states that it would have been obvious to combine Keyser with Williams to render claim 1 unpatentable.

Amended claim 1 recites, among other things, that the remote office communicates with the main office in conformity with the set of access rules received from the main office and wherein the set of access rules govern the transmission of data from the remote office to the main office. Claim 1 further recites that for each type of data transfer from the remote office to the main office there is an access rule that comprises an only formatting standard rule used by the main office for data transfers of that type. The formatting standard rule for the data transfer of that type is sent to the remote office before the remote office sends entered data to the main office such that the entered data is first correctly formatted to be compatible with the only format used by the main office for the data transfer of that type. Thus, the remote office is not given a choice of formatting of data for each type of data transfer to the main office, but is instead forced to use the data formatting standard provided for that type of data transfer.

As noted, Keyser fails to teach data formatting standards. Williams discloses formatting rules being provided from a server to a client. However, Williams discloses that at least some of the data objects that will be sent to the server from the client have multiple format rules available to the user of the client computer. This is evident from figure 12A and the related discussion in Williams whereby for at least some data objects, there are multiple formatting options that the user can choose from, such as step 1207.

Thus, the user can choose from multiple formats so that the server may receive the data object in one of various formats.

This is contrary to the recitations of claim 1 whereby the remote office gets data formatting standards, and where for each type data transfer, the remote office must use the only format that is compatible with the main office for that type of data transfer. This is a significant difference, since for a particular type of data transfer, the main office of claim 1 needs to deal with only one formatting standard whereas the server of Williams must be more complex as it must deal with multiple formatting standards for at least some of the data objects. This difference, and the resulting complexity required for the server of Williams, becomes even more significant when multiple remote offices that transfer data to the main office are considered, as recited in claim 9. For example, in Williams, for a given data object that has multiple formats that the user may select, the server must be able to deal with both the format chosen by one client for a data object while also dealing with another format chosen by another client for the same data object.

Therefore, claim 1 is allowable over the cited combination of references for at least these reasons. Dependent claims 2-9 depend from an allowable claim 1 and are also allowable for at least the same reasons. Additionally, one or more of claims 2-9 recite additional features that are patentable over the cited references, such as claim 9 discussed above which introduces multiple remote offices.

Claims 10-30

The Office Action relies upon the same combination of references for claims 10 and 19. The Office Action also relies upon Williams for the data formatting standard for claim 27. Amended claims 10, 19, and 27 include similar recitations as claim 1 with respect to data formatting standards. Accordingly, claims 10, 19, and 27 are also allowable over combinations of references that rely upon Williams for a teaching of the data formatting standards for the same reasons as those for claim 1.

Dependent claims 11-18, 20-26, and 28-30 depend from allowable claims 10, 19, and 27, respectively, and are also allowable for at least the same reasons. Furthermore, one or more of claims 11-18, 20-26, and 28-30 recite additional features that are patentable over the cited references.

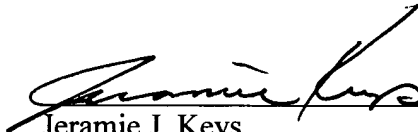
Conclusion

Applicants assert that the application including claims 1-13 and 15-30 is now in condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the amendments and remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees beyond the noted fee for continued examination and a two month extension of time are believed due. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,

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